

LABOUR MONTHLY

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Democracy and the Unions

'The trade unions know their business,' says Harry Brotherton, President of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.



Afro-Asian Unity

The Cairo Conference as witnessed by D. N. Pritt, Q.C.

Other Articles include

NOTES OF THE MONTH

by R.P.D. 1. Nearer the Summit? 2. A note on Mr. Thorneycroft.

THE WAY AHEAD

Councillor Renée Short, C.C., shows how to carry forward Labour's fight.

INDONESIA— THE TRUTH

Jack Woddiss gives the facts about Dutch intrigues out there.

SOVIET FOOTBALL

reviewed by George Sinfield, player-manager of the first team to visit the U.S.S.R.

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

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CHEERING READERS

A MOST CHEERING New Year greeting came from a reader in an *English coalfield* who had pledged to win 'three new readers by Christmas'. Pledge over-fulfilled! From two readers only this time last year, he reached ten in December. They included two secretaries and two presidents of miners' lodges, one Labour councillor, and one labour party ward committee man. But that was a beginning only. 'Following some keen arguments—and I DO tell everyone the debt I owe L.M.—one of my new miner readers says:

"You know, that article, *War on the Unions*, by Gardner of the Foundry Workers was wonderful. All my mates read it. I've trouble in getting my L.M. back."

'I said: "I'd better make a note of that, because it is the way to get new readers".

'He went on: "I think I could get you several readers with the January number".

"How many's several?"

"Well, maybe I could get twenty."

'I tried to convince him that that was impossible, but he wouldn't have it. He told me yesterday he had made twelve definite readers, and he has still some to see. One of his new readers came back for another copy for his mate. I feel very satisfied that we have been able to extend L.M. circulation. This is only the beginning.'

Not everyone is so well-placed to win new readers. But whether it is coalfield, factory, depot, office or college the decisive thing is that there should be a reader about who sees and seizes opportunities. A *Lancashire* circulation builder, writing of his current gains, says he had

'two years' supply of L.M. in my kit bag during the war, and the Army Bureau of Current Affairs had only to announce their subject and I had as much "gen"—or more!—as their paid speaker. Let's aim to get those bomb tests stopped, as Bulganin suggests, from January 1, 1958'. A *Londoner* writes 'you will be almost as pleased as I am to send subscriptions to these personal friends in the following Middle East countries where L.M. can now be sent openly. One has just been released from internment under terrible conditions. But he writes free of bitterness and full of optimism and courage, thanking me especially for R.P.D.'s recent writings on the Middle East, which he has translated for discussion locally. I feel privileged to pay these subs'. From *Wales*: 'As a practical way of showing appreciation of the January number received this morning, here is a subscription for a year to the friends named below'. A *West Country Labour Party* fund-supporter writes: 'We cannot do without the *Monthly* to give our thoughts body; it is amazing how ones' thoughts find expression in the Notes. I suppose it is because we have been studying L.M. so long; also, the fact that what has been expected has so often happened in practice. Anyhow, we can see great things happening and it is very heartening'. From the *South Coast*, admiration for Page Arnot's article on China, 'the account of a wonderful revolutionary leap of 600 years in 9 years. Stupendous and awe-inspiring! May 1958 bring us much nearer to peace in the world and to a real socialist fight in Britain'. A *Scot* wishes us 'the most wonderful holiday, to your heart's desire and the greatest possible prosperity to the fund', adding: 'and I wish all American forces the fullest

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

1. *Nearer the Summit?*

MAX BEERBOHM once wrote about the Happy Hypocrite. It was a story about a man whose hideous and repulsive character was reflected in his countenance. So he tried wearing a mask of a decent and kindly citizen to hide his real face. He wore the mask so long that in the end his face became like the mask. Let us hope that this little parable may prove true of the attitude of the Western statesmen to a Summit Conference.

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President Eisenhower and Premier Macmillan in their recent speeches, in face of the rising hurricane of universal public demand for a Summit Conference, have found themselves compelled to tack a little to the wind. They have continued to reiterate more violently than ever their absolute detestation and distrust of the Russians, their certainty that no Conference with them can prove of any use and that no agreement would be kept, and their adoring faith in nuclear weapons as the sole salvation. With inexhaustible fertility they have poured out an ever extending proliferation of crippling prior conditions to spike any proposition of a Conference before it could meet. But after all this they have always been careful to

add, in some corner of their discourse, some little entangling saving clause to explain that they are not really advocating a negative attitude, they are of course always ready to consider and study any constructive proposal, and they are not absolutely and in principle against a Conference.

Consider the sequence of events on the chilly Western uplands during the past few weeks, in face of the ceaseless warm stream of friendly Soviet Notes for negotiation and peace, and the rising pressure of the lower masses in the West (not so low either, if we consider the 9,000 scientists) on the icy, petrified statesmen at the top.

NATO Compromise

The NATO Council in December was originally convened as a substitute 'Heads of State meeting' (so it was called) to head off the already rising demand for a real Heads of State meeting. It was originally convened solely for the purpose of plastering over the cracks in NATO, speeding up the arms race and ratifying the establishment of American missile bases in Western Europe. Secretary Dulles explained in a press interview beforehand that mere acceptance of the missile bases 'in principle' would be regarded as equivalent to rejection; what was wanted was the British model of the Bermuda Agreement to be imposed on the countries of Western Europe. The Bulganin Notes to the NATO Governments on the eve of the Council meeting were denounced as worthless 'propaganda', a transparent device to confuse and split the NATO discussions, and duly to be ignored in the proceedings. However, in the event, the Bulganin Notes dominated the proceedings at Paris. They were brought in directly to the forefront in the speech of Adenauer, and, after Adenauer, in that of Macmillan. The Council ended up with a compromise double-barrelled resolution (after the standard anti-Soviet incantations), endorsing the missile sites in principle, but also endorsing the principle of negotiation with the Soviet Union on disarmament before the adoption of the nuclear sites would become operative. In short, as a wag suggested, rearmament 'in principle' and disarmament 'in principle'. The 'united' compromise reflected the real division.

Cracks in the Ice?

Premier Macmillan's broadcast on January 4, after the customary denunciation of the wicked Russians and glorification of nuclear weapons as the chosen strategy of the West, proceeded in the middle to throw out a suggestion for a Non-Aggression Pact

as a 'start' on the way to a wider agreement. The suggestion fluttered the diplomatic doves, won frowns from Washington, and had to be officiously explained away by the Foreign Office as only a proposal complementary to and conditional on a wider general agreement (which was not what he had said). President Eisenhower's State of the Union Message on January 9 began with the most violent denunciation of 'Communist imperialism' as 'a threat unique in history' and a 'threat to our safety and to the hope of a peaceful world'. He made his main message a call to speed up the arms race and increase U.S. direct arms expenditure by the colossal sum of \$5,100 million (£1,800 million) over the next two years, at the same time as the Soviet Union was decreasing its arms expenditure and cutting down its armed forces. He erected a new barbed wire entanglement of prior conditions and provocative propositions to bar the way to any reasonable prospect of a Conference. But he also was at pains to explain that the United States was not of course opposed to a Summit Conference under proper conditions, after proper preparations, if and providing, etc.

Words and Deeds

On face value, taken literally, and in their context, these meagre and quarter-hearted concessions to popular feeling might not seem worth much. 'Deeds, not words', has now become the favourite maxim of these champions of the arms race; and certainly their deeds, in raising their arms programmes to record heights, are more eloquent than their faltering, grudging, warning-filled words about the shadowy possibility of a conference and peace. The latter words bear so far the character not so much of any serious and sincere conversion to the principles of peaceful co-existence, but rather of an unwilling sop to appease public opinion. As Mr. Macmillan is understood to have indicated in his indiscreet off-the-record talk to American journalists during the Paris meeting in December, it is proving difficult to carry the British people along to continue to accept the crushing burdens of the cold war rearmament programme, and therefore it may become desirable to prove to them in practice that no conference with the Russians can produce any results. Naturally, if such calculations were to govern the approach, the omens for a Summit Conference might hardly be auspicious.

Enlarging the Cracks

But even these ill-graced, reluctant and condition-qualified concessions of the Western statesman to the popular demand for a

Summit Conference have begun to prove a boomerang. All the fulminations, imprecations, and dire warnings against the Soviet Union have been received with indifference and taken for granted like last year's sermon. All the attention of public opinion, all the public discussion, has been fixed on the hints of a possible Summit Conference, a Non-Aggression Pact, disengagement in Europe, and the like. What was previously denounced as impracticable, unthinkable and almost treasonable, now begins to be assumed. Previously it was suggested that the only use of a Conference would be to prove its failure. Now it is insisted that, if such a Conference were to be held, its failure would be so disastrous that every care must be taken in its prior preparation to ensure that it succeeds. Previously the Foreign Office used to insist that such a Conference would require 'infinite' preparation (the mathematical definition of infinity implying the continuous prolongation of a line without a terminus). Now it is even beginning to be suggested that the prior Foreign Ministers' Conference, on which the West still insists, should be merely a preliminary to determine the agenda, and not, as was originally proposed, a substitute for a meeting of Heads of State, so as to guarantee that the unerring hand of Dulles, as the chosen mouthpiece of the peace-loving and statesmanlike West, should be able to ensure the wreck.

A Foot in the Door

Step by step the ground shifts. The wedge has entered. The public has got a foot in the door. Each new dilatory argument or attempted formal show of a concession gives rise to new questions, new dilemmas and further consequences, making necessary further arguments and new positions. Provided the public campaign is maintained and stepped up, the Western statesmen may yet find themselves, despite their original intentions, pushed, pulled, dragged, coaxed, harried, bullied, committed, and finally, before many months are out, directly involved in a Summit Conference convened to discuss the ending of the cold war, practical steps for disarmament, and concrete settlements for peaceful co-existence.

Stony Ascent

It is worth recalling the experience which led up to the first Summit Conference at Geneva in 1955. Was that a plain smooth road? Did the Western leaders leap to it with joy? Very much on the contrary. They were resisting and denouncing it almost until the last moment. As late as May 11, the day after the Western

invitation had gone out, the *Daily Telegraph* editorial was still mechanically deriding the 'abandoned enthusiasm on the left for these talks at the summit'. All the familiar obstructive arguments of today were used then. As late as March 28, 1955, Premier Eden was still countering in parliament the demand for a summit conference (voiced in the same parliamentary debate by Sir Winston Churchill) with the familiar blocking gambit that there should first be preliminary meetings 'maybe in the first instance at the official level, and then at Foreign Ministers' level'. President Eisenhower on March 30, 1955, directly denounced the proposal as 'dangerous'. What caused the sudden reversal within a few weeks, with Eden's announcement of the new policy, Eisenhower's endorsement, and the Western Powers' formal invitation on May 10? The American press had no doubt of the answer. It was the British general election impending on May 26, and the fear of a Conservative defeat.* In other words, it was the pressure of public opinion which compelled the meeting against the real wishes of the rulers of the Western powers. The weakness in 1955 was that public opinion, overjoyed at this initial success, failed to follow it up, and allowed the ground won to be lost again by the Western wrecking tactics at the Foreign Ministers' Conference in the autumn. That lesson needs to be borne in mind today.

From 1955 to 1957

Today the situation has developed very much further than in 1955. On the one hand, the danger is greater and more urgent. This is evident from the development of new weapons of mass destruction with a range and power rendering all old military calculations out of date. On the other hand, the peoples in all countries are far more conscious of the urgency of the danger and united in the demand for steps to end it. This has been shown in the numerous newspaper polls, showing overwhelming majorities in all countries, including in the United States, ranging from two-thirds to three-quarters or four-fifths and over, for an immediate Summit Conference, the ending of tests, and the banning of nuclear weapons. The balance of the world has further shifted against the war camp. The ignominious defeat of Anglo-French imperialism in the Suez war revealed the new world situation, no less than the

*The *New Yorker* prints a revealing "Letter from Washington" by Richard H. Rovere. He confirms quite coolly that, as we said at the time, "part of the story" of this Conference is that it was "a stunt designed to influence the British elections". Washington "attached great importance to keeping the Conservative Party in office". Now that the Tories are safely in, "the meeting looms as more of an irritation than ever", and "is looked upon in official circles as one of the more lamentable developments of recent months". (Tom Driberg in *Reynolds News*, 10.7.55.)

collapse of the Western dreams of fomenting a successful counter-revolution in Eastern Europe. The myth of Western nuclear, strategic and technological superiority has given place to a reverse panic in face of the Sputniks. 'The days of our military supremacy were brief,' mourns Walter Lippmann, 'and they have ended'. Accompanying this has been the rapid further advance of disintegration of the ramshackle system of Western military alliances, NATO, the Baghdad Pact and SEATO, fabricated, subsidised and armed by the United States for the purposes of the cold war, and now increasingly out of relation to strategic and political realities.

Europe and the United States

In 1955 the revolt of the Western European peoples against the domination of the United States and its cold war rearmament programmes was one of the factors which compelled the American rulers, in reversal of their previous declarations, to agree to a Summit Conference. This process has gone much further today. The *New York Herald Tribune* pinpointed alarm over the results of an enquiry into Western European public opinion conducted by the International Research Association in October, 1957. The first question ran:

In case war breaks out between the United States and Russia, do you think your country should do everything in its power not to get involved?

Yes was the majority answer in seven of the eight Western European countries covered. In Britain 54 per cent were against being involved in an American-Soviet war; in West Germany, 63 per cent; in France, 66 per cent; in Italy, 72 per cent; in Norway, 74 per cent.

A Loaded Question

The second question was peculiar in the extreme:

Do you find that occupation by a country like Russia is preferable to war?

Even this loaded and provocative cold war question produced results very startling to the champions of the cold war. In Britain and Holland 18 per cent or more than one in six, said that they would prefer Russian occupation to war; in Belgium and Sweden, 15 per cent; in France, 23 per cent; in West Germany, 28 per cent; in Austria, 35 per cent. It was noticeable that the highest proportion favourable to the hypothesis of a Russian occupation was in those countries which had had practical experience of Soviet occupation. Thus a question which was deliberately framed by the

war-makers to present a fantastic hypothesis out of all relation to political realities (not the actual American military occupation, but an entirely imaginary Soviet military occupation, was presented as the problem before the Western European peoples), and intended thereby to elicit a unanimous 'No! Never!' as a supposed triumphant vindication of the war-makers, revealed instead a state of public opinion far from congenial to the champions of the cold war.

End of the 'Defence' of Western Europe

These newspaper polls are by their nature of only limited value as a true measure of public opinion. But there are very solid grounds for the sharp revolt of the Western European peoples against the latest forms of the NATO programme. The original theory at its foundation nine years ago was 'to defend' Western Europe against a hypothetical onslaught of 'Russian hordes' by establishing a combined West-European-American army under an American Commander for 'collective defence'. The theory was in any case only fit for imbeciles, since it assumed that it would take several years to build the combined army supposedly indispensable for defending Western Europe, and that during those years there would be no danger of the Russians attacking until the combined army was ready. This comical absurdity was alone sufficient to expose the hypocrisy of the pretence of the 'defensive' character of NATO. And indeed all the military and political experts of the West have since abundantly admitted that there is in reality no expectation of any Soviet military offensive to the West; the real 'menace of Communism', they explain is different. The real need for the occupation troops, as Professor Kennan has explained, is for 'internal security', against the possible development of the 'Communist menace' (working class revolt) *within* the countries of Western Europe; hence the refusal of the Western powers to accept the Soviet proposals for the removal of all occupation troops from *both* sides of Europe. Nevertheless, the old theory could at least be made to look like, at any rate for very simple souls, a plan for the 'defence' of Western Europe. All this has now been abandoned with the adoption of the new NATO strategy for the establishment of American missile bases in Western Europe.

Menace of the Missile Bases and H-Bomb Planes

The new NATO strategy allocates to Britain and Western Europe the rôle of the main American rocket-launching base and H-bomb

plane-launching base, therefore admittedly marked out for destruction, in the event of a war between the United States and the Soviet Union. The rocket missiles are only offensive weapons, which cannot defend Western Europe, but can only ensure its destruction. Thus the new strategy is not for the defence of Western Europe, but for the destruction of Western Europe. This rôle of expendable base of American atom bombers was accepted by Britain through the Attlee-Bevin Government ten years ago, but by no other Western European country prior to the Paris NATO meeting except Franco Spain. The new issue of the rocket missiles, and the public announcement of the continuous flight overhead of American planes carrying H-bombs over Britain since last October, have shocked the widest sections of opinion into a new awareness. Assurances of 'negative control' through pledges of governmental consultation before use—sufficiently flimsy assurances in any case, since the decision would be a matter of minutes—have been wiped out by subsequent American press explanations that the indispensable immediate decision of the American commander on the spot, without waiting for consultation, would be adequately covered by the system of 'advance approval' stated to have been agreed by both governments for cases of emergency. With this open menace flying overhead, and with the known tendencies of present American policy and the Strategic Air Command, it is not surprising that the overwhelming pressure of public opinion in Western Europe is now increasingly directed to compel a Summit Conference in order to ease the cold war and tackle the question of nuclear weapons.

We Can Win the Summit Conference

It would certainly be premature to assume that the battle for a Summit Conference has already been won. But the stream of support is gathering such volume that the opponents have begun to adopt an apologetic and temporising tone, while the expert political commentators even tend to treat it as if it were a foregone conclusion. The signs of the times sufficiently indicate that, if the campaign is maintained, this first objective can be won, and can be won in the near future. What can still be expected will be, no longer forthright open opposition, but every kind of stonewalling, delaying and wrecking tactics to place ever new obstacles in the path of the meeting, or to hamstring its scope and character before it meets. Unceasing vigilance will be necessary to defeat such tactics. The campaign needs not only to be maintained and intensified, in order to ensure that the Conference is held as early as possible in the

present urgent situation, but also to be combined already with the presentation and popularisation of the broad principles of agreement which such a Conference should achieve.

Geneva I and Geneva II

Opponents of the Conference sedulously seek to spread the story that the first Geneva Summit Conference of 1955 was a 'failure', thereby proving the futility of such attempts. But they are distorting the facts. The first Summit Conference of 1955 was not a failure. As an initial meeting it was a success. It successfully reached unanimous directives on the further work to be done. It changed for the moment the entire international climate. Its very convening lifted a load from the hearts of men and raised high hopes in every country in the world. Indeed, it was not its failure, but its success that terrified the statesmen of the West. Everywhere the progressive forces leaped forward; the wintry climate of the cold war gave place to spring and new confidence of popular advance. In alarm the Western statesmen decided to reverse the engines. At the Foreign Ministers' Conference in October they repudiated the Geneva Directive. This Directive had laid down as the first task the establishment of European Collective Security (the end of the partition of Europe between opposing armed *blocs*) and only within that framework the unification of Germany. The Western Foreign Ministers demanded in isolation the unification of Germany, with the openly proclaimed aim that it should then become part of the Western military *bloc*. Thereby they repudiated the Geneva Directive and on this basis broke the Conference. The fruits of the first Summit Conference were thus wilfully and deliberately destroyed, with the consequent grave worsening of the international situation today.

For Success This Time

The lesson of this experience of the first Summit Conference is clear. The broad popular peace movement whose campaign had won the first Summit Conference relaxed and virtually demobilised as soon as the meeting had taken place. The battle was widely regarded as in effect already won instead of as entering into the most critical stage. Therefore the enemy was able to conduct a successful counter-offensive. The conclusion for today is inescapable. The first immediate objective is to secure the convening of the Summit Conference as the indispensable initial step towards

the relaxation of the cold war and the hammering out of international agreements on the issues in dispute. There is no question of laying down beforehand limitations and fixed conditions for the Conference. The essential first step is to establish the principle of negotiation in place of the methods of the arms race and the cold war. But this is only the beginning, not the end. If the first objective of the Summit Conference is won, the greatest tasks of the peace movement then open out.

Aims for Peace

The imminent danger of major war is not averted so long as nuclear weapons threaten the world. The danger is not averted so long as Europe and the world are divided into opposing armed *blocs*. The prospect of peace cannot become effective until stable international agreements are reached to replace the cold war and the arms race by peaceful co-existence and disarmament. For this reason it is essential, while not laying down prior conditions for the Conference, to mobilise already the widest popular support for the key aims which all supporters of peace will desire to see achieved through such a Summit Conference and its sequel. Such aims are the cessation of tests; the banning of nuclear weapons; the reduction of all armaments; the withdrawal of political and strategic trade bans; and steps towards concrete settlements in Europe on the basis of collective security, disengagement and withdrawal of troops, and for the renunciation of force in the Middle East.

Labour Into Battle

It is of major significance in this situation that the most recent official declarations of Labour policy are moving increasingly in the direction of these aims. Official Labour is still tied to the bipartisan policy of NATO, the Baghdad Pact and SEATO; the American military alliance; nuclear strategy; and the acceptance of American military occupation and the rocket bases. But rank and file pressure, already evident in the important resolutions adopted at the Brighton Conference, is having its effect. The broadcast interview of Aneurin Bevan in 'Radio Link' took a positive and constructive line in relation to the aims of a Summit Conference, negotiation with the Soviet Union, disengagement in Europe and full criticism of the NATO decisions for the establishment of rocket missile sites. Mr. Gaitskell in India presented himself as the apostle of NATO and the Western line, and was met with public criticism by Premier Nehru. But in his *Reynolds News*

interview on January 12, and his statement criticising the Macmillan broadcast on January 17, he has proclaimed a platform for a Summit Conference within three months ('I would say Yes to Bulganin'); for suspension of nuclear tests; for an atom-free zone and withdrawal of troops in Central Europe; and for steps to relax tension in the Middle East. All this provides a basis which could win overwhelming popular support. What is still lacking is the active nation-wide campaign of the entire strength of the trade union and labour movement to rouse the people for such a policy and compel its adoption. This is equally vital for the future of peace and the future of Labour in Britain.

2. A Note on Mr. Thorneycroft

There can be no separation of the supreme question of peace from the present internal economic and political situation in Britain. The one governs the other. Who holds the key to the one holds the key to the other. The objectives of a policy for peace are the indispensable foundation for any serious programme to tackle the present acute economic problems which are now in the forefront of public attention. These economic problems have been sharply highlighted by the resignation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the division of the Tory Cabinet. Why did Mr. Thorneycroft resign? The initial announcement declared that the split took place over the demand for a further cut of £50 million in the social services additional to the cuts already agreed. No mention was made of the arms estimates in the original statement. But subsequent information revealed that the battle had developed over the size of the arms estimates, and had only culminated in the split over the social services.

Beyond the Cold War Economy

The net effect of the controversy and of all the elaborate explanations has been to discredit both sides of the Tory Cabinet equally. Mr. Macmillan and his colleagues were disingenuous in concealing the division over the arms estimates and seeking to present themselves as the champions of the social services, when they were in fact engaged in cutting them. Mr. Thorneycroft and his colleagues threw away the chance of a significant resignation over the size of the arms expenditure, and instead allowed themselves to be manœuvred by the astute Premier into the rôle of the arch-enemies of the social services. The conclusion is equally

damning to both sides. Both sides agreed on the inflated arms estimates, the main direct inflationary factor in British economy. Both sides equally attack the 'sacrosanct' conception of the 'Welfare State' and differ only in the method and timing of cuts in the social services. Thus the policy of both sides is equally contrary to the interests of the British people. The ruinous consequences of the Cold War Economy of post-war Britain (dubbed 'prosperity' with inflation) is bringing down the Tory Government as surely as it brought down the Attlee-Bevin Government. Along the whole front, both at home and abroad, the road is open for Labour's offensive.

January 20, 1958.

R.P.D.

LABOUR MONTHLY

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

THE MEERUT PRISONERS

The Meerut prisoners have been sentenced. After nearly four years in the stifling jail of Meerut, held without bail and tried without jury, they receive sentences of transportation for life, for twelve years, for ten years. What Devil's Island meant in the calendar of French Imperialism, what northernmost Siberia meant in the record of the Tsardom, that transportation has meant in the annals of British India. The penal settlements, and of these the Andaman Islands are the most used and the best known, are a bye-word for the horrors inflicted on their inmates, fever-ridden swamps, where disease and death commute the government sentences of long-term imprisonment.

These men had dared to help in the organisation of trade unions, they had dared to lead mass strikes and to develop the class character of the workers' struggle in India. Through their efforts and through the lessons of the strike they led, the Indian workers were rapidly overcoming the weaknesses of the earlier period and as a consequence were growing increasingly conscious of themselves as a class, and had taken the first steps to independent struggle and leadership of the whole struggle of the Indian masses.

It is the glory of the Meerut prisoners that for the first time on such a charge representatives of the exploited classes of India and Britain stood together. Their stand is a symbol of that unity of the British working class with the masses of the British Empire which alone can destroy British Imperialism.

The Meerut prisoners, Englishmen and Indians in the dock together, destroyed once and for all the jingo picture of 'black men' versus 'white men', of 'Asiatics against Europeans' and showed the true line of cleavage in a fight of the oppressed of both nations against the oppressors.

From *The Meerut Sentences*, by R. Page Arnot, February, 1933.

TRADE UNIONS KNOW THEIR BUSINESS

* HARRY BROTHERTON

I HOPE most trade unionists realise that the recent intervention by the Press in the affairs of the trade unions, particularly those of the Electrical Trades Union, was not prompted by any kindly consideration for their well being. The interventionists argued that the domestic affairs of the unions concerned not only trade unionists, but the public at large—whatever this may mean. This argument from such a source is anything but impressive. Would Fleet Street agree that the affairs of private associations—trusts, cartels, monopolies and the like—are as much the concern of trade unionists and the public as they are of the members of the associations? I wonder! I think there would be much more substance in an assertion that such organisations as these are the concern of other than their members. If a trading association forms a price ring controlling the cost of goods in wide demand, the effects of the ring are certainly of interest to the association's members, who aim at high profits, but also to many thousands of trade unionists and other members of the public, who more often than not are compelled to pay inflated prices for the goods in question.

With equal logic—certainly with much more justification—trade unionists could claim the right of access to the minutes of private associations and to information on their under-the-counter trade arrangements, just as Fleet Street apparently expects to interfere in the domestic affairs of the unions. It does seem an astonishing thing that some of our own people fail to appreciate the elementary fact that the big national dailies and evening papers are owned and controlled by private capitalists, men who deliberately slant news and views to suit their own purposes. If there is doubt in anybody's mind on this I would refer them to three quotations which appear in the current issue of *The Draughtsman*, organ of the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen. Here are the quotations:

I do not wish to be hypercritical, but the plain fact is—and we all know it to be true—that whenever we see a story in a newspaper concerning something we know about, it is more often wrong than right. (John

*As many of our readers will know, Mr. Brotherton is General Secretary of the National Union of Sheet Metal Workers and President of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

Gordon, Editor *Sunday Express*, quoted in the report of the Royal Commission on the Press.)

I run the paper purely for the purpose of making propaganda and with no other motive. (Lord Beaverbrook, owner of the *Daily Express*, quoted in the report of the Royal Commission on the Press.)

A document called the 'Red Letter' was produced and printed in the *Daily Mail* and elsewhere. . . . Much energy was spent later by Labour investigators on showing it to be a forgery. . . . The electoral results were what might be expected; the Labour Party lost 42 seats. (Professor G. D. H. Cole and Raymond Postgate, describing the downfall of the first Labour Government in 1924, in their book *The Common People, 1746-1938*.)

Most of the big capitalist newspapers have a remarkable capacity for telling the unions how to run their business. They are never concerned with strengthening the unions, never at helping them to perform their functions of improving pay and working conditions. Rather they try always to sow dissension in our ranks. They try to stop us from doing the very things workers expect their unions to do: that is, press for improvements in their conditions of employment. The newspapers say it is not our business to make political pronouncements, and even accuse us of irresponsibility if we rely on our industrial strength to protect the working people from the consequences of the political and economic policies of the Tory Government. And, as we have lately seen, they try to interfere with union elections. The hostile opinions they express on the claims of the unions show clearly how little they are interested in the true welfare of the workers. By their attempts at interference the newspapers try to corrupt the rules of unions, rules designed to give fair play and equality to candidates in elections.

The unions know best how to run their own business. They must refuse to allow the Press Lords—Beaverbrook, Kemsley and the rest—to interfere in their work. Press campaigns that seek to picture the unions as organisations controlled autocratically by small groups, who have succeeded in muscling-in to key positions and who are able to ride roughshod over the desires and decisions of ordinary members, are grotesque. Could anyone really believe that this sort of bullying domination could have emptied the engineering shops and shipyards of hundreds of thousands of trade unionists on the day they refused to work, December 2, 1953, and again in the great dispute in the early part of last year? Could anyone believe that national, area, district and branch committees, democratically elected under the requirements of the various union constitutions, would permit any officer or group of officers, however

highly placed, to abrogate their rights and privileges provided them under the rules? Of course not.

I might say to members of trade unions—don't let them kid you! I don't think this advice is necessary, but I do say to others—in what I hope is very proper language—our members are most unlikely to be persuaded. Insofar as it has any effect at all, I would warn that the game now being played by some newspapers of elevating odd trade union delinquents—under discipline of their duly constituted authorities—into public martyrs, could encourage the adoption of a similar attitude of mind by other wrongdoers contravening other codes of law, whether those codes are voluntarily accepted, as in the case of trade unionists, or those imposed upon a nation by its Government. Fleet Street's 'high priests of democracy' have no idea how real democracy in the unions works. I personally know of no other more democratic machinery in the world.

My own union is an example. We lay down by rule that any member, dissatisfied with the findings of his branch committee, may appeal to a general meeting of branch members. If dissatisfied with the meeting's decision, he can appeal to the district committee. Failing satisfaction there, he can appeal to the national executive committee, whose decision is final. And a branch which finds itself dissatisfied with a decision of the district committee can appeal to the executive committee for a ruling, and if the findings of that body are unsatisfactory, the branch can take the matter to the union's next annual conference—which consists of delegates directly nominated and elected by the branches. I would wish that the staffs of the newspapers that malign us so much could invoke such democratic procedure of appeals against grievances.

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THIS PICTURE - AND THAT

QUÆSTOR

*I labour for peace, but when I speak
unto them thereof they make them
ready to battle. Psalms 120, v. 6.*

AT no time since the second world war have the imperialist governments—British, American and French—shown themselves so determined to sacrifice the interests of their own peoples and of world peace to their cold, malignant and implacable enmity to the U.S.S.R. At no time has the stubborn determination of the Soviet Union to go on with its efforts for peace, whatever the odds, been so apparent.

The NATO governments met in conference in Paris from December 16 to 19. Right up to the conference opening, the official press here and elsewhere tried to leave no doubt about its purpose. This had been well summed up by one of our most orthodox and most pro-American daily newspapers:

What is needed from the Paris meeting, therefore, is not some new declaration of the rights of man or new slogans about peace and freedom, which its composition and purpose make it unsuited to supply. . . . What is needed first and foremost is a new military structure which will restore to the West, and particularly to the United States, an adequate overall strength. . . . The NATO Council's main task therefore must be to restore the deterrent. . . . There is only one possible way of meeting this vital requirement. America's allies must allow her to station on their territory intermediate-range missiles.

(Daily Telegraph, December 13, 1957.)

But things did not go quite that way. A number of smaller countries were already nervous about what the *Daily Telegraph* thought was a 'must'. Moreover, on the very eve of the conference Soviet Premier Bulganin had sent messages to the heads of the NATO governments—and also that of Spain with whom the U.S.S.R. has no diplomatic relations—proposing top level discussions on the following immediate proposals for improving mutual confidence:

1. A joint pledge by the Powers not to use atomic or hydrogen weapons.
2. The ending of nuclear tests for two or three years, as from January 1, 1958.

3. Agreement of the Great Powers not to place nuclear weapons in East or West Germany: and of the two German governments, with those of Poland and Czechoslovakia, not to manufacture or themselves instal such weapons.
4. A non-aggression agreement 'in one form or another' between the NATO and Warsaw Pact states.
5. Britain, France, U.S.S.R. and U.S.A to renounce force in settling Middle East questions, and any other steps infringing the independence of Middle Eastern states.
6. The ending of all forms of war propaganda.

In addition, the U.S.S.R. declared itself ready to reduce armed forces and armaments on a basis acceptable to all concerned; to take part in a complete ban on nuclear weapons, cessation of their manufacture and destruction of stocks: and to join any plan for withdrawing foreign armed forces from *all* countries, including those of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The U.S.S.R. would reduce its forces in Germany, or withdraw them altogether—as well as from other countries where they are stationed under the Warsaw Treaty—'provided that the armed forces of the United States, Great Britain and France are withdrawn from the territories of the Federal Republic of Germany and from other NATO member-countries'.

These proposals caused consternation in the NATO camp, just because they appeared so reasonable to the man in the street. The Foreign Office sneered as usual that there was 'nothing new' in them: the *Daily Telegraph* actually published a list of eight previous letters from Bulganin making disarmament offers, between September 19, 1955, and April 20, 1957. But what the man in the street noted was that such reasonable offers had been available for over two years—and had all been rejected. Finally, the correspondents at Paris began openly referring to the growing demand for negotiations. Norway and Denmark flatly opposed any creation of rocket bases on their territory. Even Adenauer asked for negotiations. Something had to be done.

The conference communiqué published on December 19 repeated earlier barefaced lies about the alleged plans of the Soviet Union for 'domination over the entire world, if possible by subversion, if necessary by violence'. It contained a mass of those very pious declarations and slogans about freedom against which the *Daily Telegraph* had warned—knowing that they were all the more sickening because of British, French and American repressions in Cyprus, Malaya and Arabia, Algeria, Formosa (Taiwan), South Korea and Vietnam. It announced agreement in principle that

stocks of rocket missiles should be established in Europe (where exactly, to be determined later). But the communiqué, while ignoring all the Soviet offers, did agree 'to examine any proposal, from whatever source, for general or partial disarmament, any proposal for enabling agreement to be reached on the controlled reduction of armaments of all types'.

This was a very small and grudging concession to the immense demand of the nations for new talks. It made even these concessions dependent on a meeting of Foreign Ministers—*i.e.*, one in which the U.S.S.R. would be safely outnumbered by three or four to one—or of the new United Nations 'Disarmament Commission', in which the U.S.A. and its satellites had ensured that 16 out of the 25 members should come from anti-Soviet governments. Yet, miserly and hedged-round with reservations as the communiqué was, it did show that the pressure for a peaceful settlement of international problems was making headway. Even the sabre-rattling *Economist* admitted that 'some kind of thinning-out process among the armies in the two halves of Germany' and 'some working arrangement about the suspension of nuclear tests' were now possible.

The response from the Soviet side was immediate. On December 21, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a resolution on foreign policy, solemnly endorsing the six main points of the Bulganin letters together with a seventh—substantial reduction of armed forces and armaments all round, of the Great Powers first of all. The resolution authorised the Soviet Government to consider further reductions in the armed forces of the U.S.S.R.; and it urged 'a personal meeting between the leaders of states and discussion by them of urgent international problems'.

The Foreign Office, true to its tradition of immediately sabotaging anything that seems to promise even the beginnings of agreement with the U.S.S.R., at once issued a grossly distorted and hostile 'analysis' of the Soviet offer (it appeared in the *Sunday Times* and *Observer* of December 22 and the *Daily Telegraph* next day). Almost immediately it became quite obvious that the dominant group at Washington represented by Dulles was also moving heaven and earth to secure rejection. Yet, as one Washington correspondent put it: 'Whatever may be Mr. Dulles' beliefs about the value of negotiating with Russia, it would seem that at the moment he has no choice but to appear to be conciliatory' (*The Times*, December 28). This was the more necessary because angry feelings were rapidly rising in Britain about the revelation (December 18) that

Macmillan had agreed in Paris to let the Americans build four rocket missile bases in Northern Scotland.

Reports of a 'crisis' in the U.S.A. government began to be carefully spread to the press—a dodge so often used before to lull the public into inactivity. The *Daily Express* began to criticise Dulles and urge negotiations. The Queen, who alone among heads of states had conspicuously failed to extend to the Soviet Union the common courtesy of congratulations on its 40th Anniversary, was induced to squeeze out of herself a few perfunctory words of polite acknowledgement in reply to a warm New Year message of goodwill and peace hopes from the Soviet leaders. Even *The Times*, on New Year's day, wrote that Britain ought to make 1958 'a year of disengagement'—earning a hostile broadside next day from the *Daily Telegraph*. On January 5 the *Observer* printed an article by Bertrand Russell advocating 'disengagement' of the two sides in Europe with an atom-free zone between them, and the *Sunday Times* published a long interview by its diplomatic correspondent with the Polish Foreign Minister Rapacki, who had first put forward this plan. Things seemed to be moving.

The previous evening, however, the Prime Minister had made a party broadcast in which—amid a murky torrent of untruths, slanders and misrepresentations of Soviet policy—there had suddenly emerged the suggestion: 'We could start by a solemn pact of non-aggression'—a proposal which the Soviet Union had already made at the Summit Conference in July, 1955, and often since.

Immediately the fat was in the fire. The 'crisis' in the U.S.A. disappeared overnight. Messages stressing 'surprise' and disapproval poured from Washington and from its faithful henchmen in Western Germany. The diehard press in Britain attacked the proposal, and on January 6 the Foreign Office issued an interpretation, explaining it away. Macmillan did not mean a pact 'signed in isolation': it should 'complement' an agreement on other matters: words must be accompanied by deeds—and so on, *ad nauseam*.

Yet the same day the Soviet Union gave an example of how deeds do follow its words. It announced a cut of 300,000 in its armed forces in accordance with the Supreme Soviet's decision of December 21, 1957—this in addition to the cut of 1,840,000 made in 1955 and 1956. The funds thus economised, said the official statement, would be diverted 'to peaceful construction and further improving the people's material and cultural standards'. The usual attempts were made by some British commentators to write down this decision; but *The Times* was forced to admit (January 8) that

it met the stock argument used by the advocates of hydrogen bombs about the need to compensate for Russia's vast manpower.

It was obviously time for the enemies of peace to press on with their offensive, and they did so. On January 8 it was announced that Dulles, at a secret meeting of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, had 'very strongly' opposed any immediate Summit conference. On January 9 Eisenhower sent a message to Congress, once again loaded with provocative falsehoods about the U.S.S.R., calling for a huge increase in armaments and armed forces and offering to the Soviet government co-operation in . . . malaria and cancer research, a proposal which, in the words of *The Times*, sounded 'something of an anti-climax' to a listening world. On January 12, after nearly five weeks delay, Eisenhower sent a reply to Bulganin's letter of December 10, making it quite clear that the Soviet proposal for heads-of-government discussions was being rejected. He made the meeting dependent on preliminary discussions, first by diplomats and then by Foreign Ministers, in which the following items must also be included:

1. Abandonment of the unanimity rule in the Security Council, *i.e.*, granting the capitalist Powers full majority rights in this body.
2. Unification of Germany by 'free elections' *now, i.e.*, with foreign troops in occupation of German territory, and Nazi-minded big business in the saddle, armed, in Western Germany.
3. Discussion of the situation in the countries of Eastern Europe, *i.e.*, where the U.S.A. and British governments failed to secure restoration of capitalism after the war.

If the U.S.S.R. agreed to these utterly irrelevant crowbars being dropped into the discussions of disarmament and peace, Eisenhower would be ready to talk about all kinds of things—stopping of nuclear tests and nuclear weapon production (but not banning the weapons themselves), reduction of armies and armaments, etc. But as clearly the U.S.S.R. would refuse to consider Eisenhower's sabotage proposals from the very first, the negotiations would get stuck among the diplomats, and would never reach the Summit level. Q.E.D. Unctuous hypocrisy could go no further. No wonder the *Daily Herald* (January 13) headed its report: 'Ike Spikes Top Talks'—and the *Daily Mail*, *Evening Standard* and *News Chronicle*, a wide range of political shades, wrote in the same strain. Moreover the same day Eisenhower rounded off the picture by proposing to Congress the biggest expenditure on war preparations ever made in peace-time, absorbing two-thirds of the U.S. Budget.

Eisenhower's letter, although drafted earlier, was delivered three days after a second message from Bulganin had reached him,

Macmillan and seventeen other heads of government. In this new letter of January 8 (which not a single British capitalist newspaper ventured to print) the Soviet government replied point by point to various sophistical arguments put up against its proposals of December 10. These it repeated, with some significant additions:

1. It pointed out that stopping nuclear tests for two or three years 'would not require any measures of control that are complicated and hard to achieve', *i.e.*, that supervision could be easily arranged, if desired.
2. Foreign military forces stationed in Germany and in the territories of *both* NATO and the Warsaw Treaty countries could be reduced by agreement, 'or on the territory of Germany, as a beginning'.
3. Land control posts and a 500-mile zone for air photography (on either side of the line dividing East and West) could be established *to supervise arrangements under points 1 and 2, i.e.*, the atom-free zone as well as that of reduced armaments.
4. A Summit conference, primarily to discuss 'the most urgent questions, whose settlement would lay the basis for an improvement in the whole international situation', should be held within the next two or three months, preferably at Geneva.
5. The Conference ought to consist of the member-states of NATO and of the Warsaw Treaty: also of *uncommitted* countries. But the U.S.S.R. would not object, at the initial stage, to only two or three from each group, or even one from each.

Comparing the Soviet proposals with those of the U.S.A. has already induced one well-known Conservative M.P. to write—and the most viciously anti-Soviet newspaper in Britain to print—the following lines:

Mr. Khrushchov is an optimist. He believes, or says he believes, that the prospects for peace are brighter. He gives the impression of being tough, but gay and full of hope. By comparison Mr. Dulles is a Dismal Jimmy. He gives the impression that he doesn't really want to negotiate about anything ever, and that the only thing he believes in is arms'.

(Sir Robert Boothby in the *Daily Telegraph*, January 10, 1958.)

The British working class however is also tough, it believes in peace and in negotiations, and it hates arms. Presented with these parallel pictures—the steady Soviet pressure for immediate steps to peace, the sullen and vindictive efforts of Downing Street and the White House to keep open the door to war—it will not hesitate. And all the more because Macmillan's reply to Bulganin (January 16) obediently backed the American demand for low-level talks, and ran away from any idea of an *immediate* non-aggression pact.

The problem is to get the information to the people. Here is a job for all of us. It will be of crucial importance to the world in the next few weeks.

THE WAY AHEAD

**Councillor Renée Short, C.C.,
Prospective Labour Candidate for Watford.**

AFTER asking the question: 'Where Do We Stand Now?' Councillor E. A. C. Roberts answered it last month by showing clearly that a vigorous campaign could turn the swing against the Tories into a swing towards Labour. Using plain language he gave much-needed publicity to the policies of the 1957 Trades Union Congress and Labour Party Conference. It is around these that a campaign can and must be fought, with determination.

What is at issue in the struggle to replace the Tory Government? It is no less than the survival of Britain, for which turning them out of office is the pre-requisite. It is the choice between the destruction of this country and the creation of the basis upon which a socialist transformation of our society can be carried out.

It depends largely on the left wing of the movement and on its ability to inform and persuade the Labour movement and the broad mass of its supporters how far the next Labour Government can and will advance along the road to socialism. Our policies are diametrically opposed to those of the Conservative Government. To bring the danger home to all, let us summarise what *they*, the Tories, stand for.

Foreign policy

Their stand on the H-bomb is for continued testing, production and use of this dreadful weapon, irrespective of the cost to humanity. They stand for total subservience to the United States. They stand for the renunciation, not of the bomb, but of our national sovereignty. We on the other hand—let it once more be made clear—stand for immediate and unilateral stopping of tests (which in turn would mean the cessation of the production of these terrible weapons). In the atmosphere so created, we would do all in our power to reach agreement between the nuclear powers on the wider issues of the future manufacture and use of the bomb. We shall work for the resumption of negotiations with the Soviet Union and America in a sincere and genuine attempt to reach agreement on the ultimate elimination of these weapons of mass destruction.

Housing

They stand for the landlords' and *rentiers'* interests, for the elimination of both housing subsidies and of publicly owned housing for the people.

Ownership of Industry

They stand for the unrestricted private ownership of industry. They oppose controls and believe the manipulation of the Stock Exchange for private profit 'makes sense'. They stand for the interests of the large insurance monopolies and against state insurance.

Education and Health

They stand for a reduction of these services. Hospitals are kept starved of capital for their necessary development, more and more charges are introduced; we have, in effect, a tax on sickness. By introducing the block grant they intend to relieve the tax payer at the expense of the rate payer. They believe in a class system of education.

Cost of living and pensions

They stand for inflation and a higher cost of living, with higher rents, rates and profits. The burden of their inflationary measures is pushed on to the shoulders of workers and pensioners.

That is what they have to offer the nation.

Yet, as Councillor Roberts truly said, by-election returns show there is no sign that this assessment of opposing policies has yet been accepted by the mass of the electorate. Very little of the swing away from the Tories is going to Labour—scarcely enough, it seems, to provide an adequate majority capable of ruling in Parliament. Why is this?

I believe these to be some of the reasons. There appears to be a lack of adequate effort in Parliament to put Labour's policies before the nation. The courtesies of politics seem to be overshadowing the realities of the political and economic fight. Some of Labour's spokesmen in the shadow cabinet could do with a shot of the 'rich, red blood of Socialism' that my dear friend Jim Campbell spoke about at Brighton. We expect our leaders to put the issues clearly and uncompromisingly and not only to attack the Tories but to put forward Labour's policy in language that all can understand. The pseudo-scientific jargon of the economists is not good

Drawings by Italian Artists



Peasant Woman

by MUCCHI



Sicilian Worker

by GUTTUSO

enough. It will not move the chap on the workshop floor nor the young people, of whom about 1,000 come on the register each year in the average constituency.

There is an almost total lack of political education in the constituency parties; bogged down by business and confused on the issues at stake, members of General Management Committees are often not in a position to put Labour's case to their fellows because they themselves are ill-informed about it. Yet it is to them that the ordinary politically-not-very-conscious Labour supporter turns for information on what the Labour Party stands for. Election results depend on these Labour supporters coming out to vote: but if they feel, as they obviously have done, that the policy of the Labour Party is far from well-defined and equivocal in its appeal to the ordinary folk, they will not bother to vote, because they will not believe that their votes can alter anything.

The result is what everybody is pleased to call 'the apathy of the electorate'. It is nothing of the sort—the militancy of the Trade Unions shows that the electorate is anything but apathetic. The capitalist national press, together with the radio and television, appear to have almost conspired to add to the confusion of the people by their inept and inaccurate accounts of conference and the resolutions passed there. Since then, they have successfully suppressed any informative explanation of Labour's policy. The working class press has not been very helpful either in some respects; inaccurate and misleading statements were made and far too much space was given to inconclusive attacks on Tory policies without pointing to the alternatives offered by Labour. On the local level, little use is being made of the local press by Constituency parties. This is a practical question. In most cases, the local press are ready and anxious to help if approached in a spirit of co-operation. To them, news is news wherever it comes from and in general, they feel obliged to give an impartial account of what is happening locally. The local press is undoubtedly a more powerful political and moral influence than it is generally thought to be. People believe what they read in their local paper, if only because they can fairly easily check the truth of most statements in it!

A great deal has been written about what is or is not contained in the policy document *Industry and Society* and about what Hugh Gaitskell and others did or did not say about it. It would be as well to understand exactly what Labour is pledged to do on this fundamental problem. We have not abandoned nationalisation as a

form of public ownership; nor have we adopted a policy that is a substitute for this. We are looking at other forms of ownership but is not that just what many of us in the Labour movement have been pressing for? We are clearly committed to take into public ownership any industry which, after enquiry, is found to be 'failing the nation'. However the take-over is achieved, we shall insist on effective ownership and control. 'Failing the nation' has also been wilfully misinterpreted by many commentators. It means just what it says. Many of the large monopolies would qualify for public ownership on these grounds. They fail the nation when they restrict their output; when they hold the housewife to ransom with their monopoly prices; and when they impose restrictive price codes on retailers and suppliers and penalise those who refuse to conform. They fail the nation if they are ineffective and wasteful because of inefficient management or insufficient investment for re-equipping their factories and workshops with up-to-date machinery to produce more and cheaper goods. They fail the nation when they deliberately sabotage the national interest and ignore Government instructions. They fail the nation if there is continual industrial unrest with the result that relationships with the Trade Union movement gradually deteriorate.

Councillor Roberts quoted Frank Cousins' remark that 'you do not necessarily get socialism with nationalisation, but you do not get socialism without nationalisation'. In my opinion, nationalisation and other forms of public ownership, such as co-operative and municipal undertakings will give us the power to plan our lives and to develop our resources for the benefit of the entire nation. That power is at present concentrated in very few hands, the interlocking and overlapping directorships of the large monopolies, the banks and insurance companies. These are the men with real power in our land. The 'leak' tribunal must have opened a few peoples' eyes to this truth! This is the power that should rest with the people. Here then, is the basis for a real step forward to socialism after the next election. Let our case be put forward to the electorate, nationally and locally, by every possible means. Only thus can we achieve a Labour government and only by having an informed and live electorate can a future Labour government hope to put through these radical measures of social change.

INDONESIA—THE TRUTH

JACK WODDIS

ON August 17, 1945, the people of Indonesia, the sixth largest state in the world, declared their independence and established their own democratic Republic. Naturally, the former owners, the Dutch colonialists, were not prepared to allow 82 million people and the rich resources of Indonesia (in which £500 million Dutch capital is said to be invested) to slip so easily from their hands. With the help of the British military forces and even using the surrendered Japanese troops, they strove to destroy the young Indonesian Republic.

For the next few years there was continual fighting between the Indonesian people and the Dutch imperialists.* Eventually in 1949 a Round-Table Conference was held at the Hague and on December 27, 1949, the transfer of sovereignty to the Republic of Indonesia was carried out. By the Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty, the Dutch Government 'unconditionally and irrevocably transfers complete sovereignty over Indonesia to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia as an independent and sovereign state'. It was a recognition of the fact that it was no longer possible for Holland to continue its direct control of Indonesia.

However, the 1949 Agreement imposed extremely severe political and military conditions on Indonesia and still left untouched Dutch economic control. This has enabled the Dutch for the past eight years to maintain a constant campaign of economic sabotage, confusion and divisions, subversion, attempts at assassination, the fostering of separatist movements and even military revolts.† Under the Round-Table Agreement the Dutch monopolies maintained their position in Indonesia. With the aid of their 'Big Five' trading companies—Borsumy, International, Lindeteves, Jacobson Van den

*Despite the Lingardjati Agreement of March 25, 1947, the Dutch launched a military attack against the Republic four months later. In December, 1947, a conference, held between the Indonesians and the Dutch, led to the signing of the Renville Agreement. On December 18, 1948, in violation of the Renville Agreement, the Dutch launched a further military aggression. Three months earlier a provocation was organised at Madiun against the Indonesian Communist Party, as a result of which many of the outstanding leaders of the Party were murdered, thousands of arrests were made and the Party forced to go into temporary illegality. This attack, organised by the right-wing Indonesian leader, Hatta, idol of the American and Dutch imperialists, weakened the national front of Indonesia at a critical moment and facilitated the Dutch military aggression.

†To list subversive activities carried out in Indonesia since 1949 would read like a 'cloak and dagger' story (the Westerling Affair, the formation of the A.P.R.A. armed forces, the plot to attack Bandung 1950, the Sultan Hamid affair, the Andi Aziz Rebellion, the attempt to establish a 'Republic of the South Moulaccas', the Macassar Events of May and August, 1950, the formation of the armed forces of the Darul Islam with the aim of establishing an Islamic State, the Sukiman fascist plot of 1951, the attempted *coup d'état* of October, 1952, the Lubis military plot of November, 1956, etc.).

Bert and Geo. Wehry—they controlled nine-tenths of the export trade. Nearly all docks and four-fifths of the quays were Dutch-owned. Over two-thirds of inter-island traffic were in the hands of the K.P.M. (The Royal Dutch Steam Packet Shipping Company), which decided its own routes and shipping schedules as it liked. Indonesia is an archipelago of more than 3,000 islands, scattered over an enormous area; control of shipping and sea routes is therefore decisive, both economically and for political and military purposes. The Dutch also owned rubber, tea, quinine, copra, coffee, and sugar estates; banks, railways, insurance; oil and other mineral resources. With such economic power in their grasp the Dutch were able not only to hold up the reconstruction of Indonesia but also to maintain political pressure and organise intrigues to prevent stability and eventually to bring about the downfall of the Republic.

In order to have a permanent base for this purpose they have insisted on holding on to West Irian, the western half of the second biggest island in the world, one-fifth of the total area of the Republic. This is in flat contradiction to the Round-Table Conference Agreement which clearly recognised the complete transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia of the whole of the former Netherlands East Indies and which stipulated that the question of West Irian should be settled 'within one year after the transfer of sovereignty through negotiations'. Negotiations in 1950 and again in 1952 reached no agreement. The Dutch then broke off all talks and unilaterally incorporated West Irian into the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Indonesian Republic, still trying for a peaceful settlement, raised the matter at the United Nations in 1954 and 1955. Each time a majority was secured for the continuation of negotiations between Indonesia and the Netherlands—but not the two-thirds majority necessary in the General Assembly. Faced by the non-co-operation of the Dutch, the Indonesian Government in 1956 announced the abrogation of the Round-Table Conference Agreement and once more demanded the return of West Irian. The recent outburst of national feeling against the Dutch which seemed to come very rapidly was the outcome of months of mounting crisis.

On November 28, 1957, the United Nations General Assembly passed by 41 votes to 29 with 11 abstentions (Great Britain voted against: the United States abstained) a resolution sponsored by 18 Asian-African nations together with Bolivia calling for negotiations to be renewed between the Netherlands and Indonesia on the status of West Irian: but it was not the two-thirds vote. The knowledge

that the colonial powers in the U.N. General Assembly had once again been able to block the demands being pressed by the majority of mankind roused very strong feelings among the Indonesian people, already angered by the recent attempt on President Sukarno's life.

Hence on December 1, 1957, the K.L.M. Airlines were forbidden to land in Indonesia. On December 2 a 24-hour general strike was called on the initiative of the Action Committee for the Liberation of West Irian—with the full support of the government. The strike was conducted with great enthusiasm and great discipline in all Dutch undertakings. This action was accompanied by workers taking over Dutch-owned companies, offices, banks, etc., while the government 'froze' the transfer back to Holland of Dutch profits. On December 3 the offices of the powerful K.P.M. shipping company were similarly taken over followed by the 'Big Five' trading companies and the Dutch banks. All these were handed over by the workers to the Indonesian government. Since then a decree by the Prime Minister has placed all Dutch plantations and enterprises, apart from shops, under the control and supervision of the Indonesian government and military forces; while on December 12 an organisation for co-operation between trade unionists and the military was established.

The Dutch government (and many sections of the press in Britain and the United States) reacted to these events by ill-informed clamour about 'communist plots'. This propaganda was exposed by the Indonesian Minister of Information, Sudibjo, who said that all this talk about communists being responsible was false.

In reality people of all strata of Indonesia including workers, peasants and youth had taken part in the struggle. The Dutch shouting was not surprising for the imperialists were used to adopting this cheap tune to camouflage their actions.

(December 18, 1957.)

Among the chief singers of this 'cheap tune' is the American State Department, which consistently peddles the story of a 'communist plot'. Is there then a plot in Indonesia? Yes, there is. But a very different one from that painted by the smart boys of the State Department.

When the U.S. Embassy in Taiwan was stormed and partly ransacked by angry crowds last May, a number of documents was lost. Two of those now brought to light and published in the *Bintang Timur* of December 21, 1957, give a lurid glimpse of gun-running from Formosa and Malaya to aid armed uprising against

the State of Indonesia. These embarrassing documents are telegrams sent from the American Embassy in Djakarta (the capital of Indonesia) to the State Department in Washington, and a copy to the American Embassy in Taipeh (capital of 'Formosa'), for increased 'assistance' through 'the available channels'.

The first telegram, dated March 18, 1957, shows the close ties with the leaders of the Moslem party, the Masjumi, dominated by right-wing forces, whose chairman is Natsir. It runs:

Masjumi leaders again insist on the necessity of increasing military aid to the D.I. and T.II forces now operating in Sumatra, West Java and elsewhere in Indonesia. In view of the grave deterioration in the position of these forces, they request that such aid should not be limited to the delivery of arms and ammunition, and suggest the transfer of units from Formosa to help the D.I. forces.

The second telegram, dated March 26, 1957, deeply implicates the former vice-president Hatta, and Sjahrir, leader of the tiny right-wing socialist party, the P.S.I. It reads, in part:

Masjumi leaders have already taken the additional measures to deepen the political crisis. With the support of the individual already known to you, Natsir was able to secure a definite refusal from his Party's central executive to join the new Government. Sjahrir has guaranteed full support for the Masjumis by the P.S.I., both in overturning the National Party and in forming a new Government under the control of the Masjumis and their supporters, and also in the move to discredit Sukarno.

I think that with the help of his agents in the armed forces Sjahrir will be able to get control of the army and replace Nasution by Subroto. In my view assistance to the military councils in Sumatra must be increased through the available channels.

In the event of the Masjumis' failure to seize power, a Sumatran Government could be formed which would then break with the Central Government. The individual known to you will on my advice tour Sumatra next month to establish personal contacts with the leaders of the Banteng and Garuda military councils of the D.I. and T.II forces. He was supplied with additional money for this purpose.

Please inform the appropriate quarters of the Darul Islam leaders' request that arms sent to them from Formosa and Malaya must carry no trade mark and should be placed in containers used locally for agricultural machinery, textiles, canned food and the like.

Events were to confirm fully the content of these telegrams—the authenticity of which has now been denied by the State Department. During this period, the former vice-president Hatta visited South and Central Sumatra, where a separatist régime had been set up, and made 'personal contacts with the leaders of the Banteng and Garuda military councils'. The American oil monopoly, the

Caltex Company, provided the special plane in which he made his journey. A few days before his departure Hatta discussed with representatives of the American Embassy in Djakarta the possibility of aid for the separatists from the Caltex and Stanvac oil monopolies, the Ford Foundation and foreign estates in Sumatra. That was reported by *Bintang Timur* on July 10, 1957.

The same paper reported further that Natsir had told the executive of his party, the Masjumi Party, that Hatta had assured the Americans that special privileges would be granted them, including oil concessions, if Sumatra were split off from the rest of the country. Further confirmation of moves to break away from Indonesia can be seen in the British press campaign in the past few weeks. For example, John Ridley, *Daily Telegraph* Special Correspondent, on December 23 after praising Hatta, Natsir and Sjahrir, stated that an opportunity might soon present itself for these three to 'come forward'. He added that a 'Communist victory in Java would drive Sumatra to secession', a point that the *Financial Times* had stressed on December 12. Vernon Bartlett writing from Kuala Lumpur in Malaya to the *Manchester Guardian* of December 29, discussed 'if and when Dr. Hatta comes to power', and boosted him as an 'outstanding leader'.

No one—except Mr. Gaitskell?—is likely to be fooled by talk of 'Java going Communist' as being the reason for the growth of the separatist movements. The Taipeh telegrams do not mention a 'Communist plot'; they make it clear that the breakaway will take place if the Masjumis fail to establish a dictatorship in Indonesia. And long before the recent crisis the separatist movement had already started a military struggle against President Sukarno and the central government—which does not include a single Communist.

Again, the various terrorist attacks in recent months should be noted. On July 4, attempts were made to assassinate leaders of the powerful trade union organisation, S.O.B.S.I.; and the same night an attempt was made on the life of D. N. Aidit, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Indonesia, during an attack on its headquarters; which were again a target on July 16. Then on November 30, came the attempt to assassinate President Sukarno; and with him, amongst others, General Nasution, army chief of staff, whom the second telegram asserted Sjahrir's agents were to 'replace'. Amongst those arrested in this connection were members of the Darul Islam movement and of army youth groups

in touch with Colonel Lubis who led the abortive *coup d'état* of November, 1956.

None of this can weaken the determination of the Indonesian people to finish with colonialism once and for all. And 1957 is not 1948, when the Madiun massacre of Communists took place; nor 1951, when thousands of Communists were arrested by the Sukiman fascist government. Today, with one million members and seven million votes in Java alone, it is the second most powerful Communist Party in Asia after China and one of the most powerful in the world. Recent events have not stopped their growth. On the contrary, they have gained in membership and votes, not least in South Sumatra, where recent elections showed a big increase over 1955. On the twelfth anniversary of independence, D. N. Aidit, their General Secretary, stated :

As long as Parliamentary means remain open to the C.P.I., it will take this path, confident that this will lead to the completion of the August Revolution in its entirety, that this will lead to power for the Indonesian people in a Republic of Indonesia which is completely independent, democratic and progressive.

Added reason for confidence is division amongst the imperialists. The recent N.A.T.O. Conference in Paris could do no more than express 'concern', thus revealing their conflicts and difficulties in organising and justifying before the world any frontal attack on Indonesia. Again, the market for Indonesian export products, formerly taking place in Rotterdam, will in future be conducted in Hamburg. To overcome their temporary shipping crisis, the Indonesian Government has concluded an agreement with Japanese ship-owners for leasing ships of 75,000 tonnage together with tankers. Nor are businessmen in Holland unanimous. In a financial report, Van der Werff & Hubrecht, stockbrokers of Amsterdam,

urgently appeal to the whole Dutch business world and the whole Dutch people to urge the Dutch Government to make a friendly gesture and transfer Irian to Indonesia. Time is pressing, and milliards of Dutch interests are at stake.

West Irian must be returned to Indonesia. The issue is one of colonialism, and it cannot be finally ended there until West Irian is re-united with the independent republic of Indonesia. This is not only the demand of Indonesia: the recent Afro-Asian Conference in Cairo shows that 1,800 million people stand firmly behind her just claim. It is this which the Dutch imperialists and American State Department have to take into account.

ASIA AND AFRICA IN UNITY

D. N. Pritt, Q.C., at Cairo as observer for the World Peace Council, describes the Conference.

THE Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference held at Cairo from December 26, 1957, to January 1, 1958, and attended by over 500 delegates from nearly fifty countries, was a remarkable success. The overworked word 'historical' may justly be used of it; it marks a most important stage in history, which now moves fast enough to keep us all out of breath, in at least two respects. Firstly, it shows a very great advance in the consolidation of the camp of peace and national liberation; secondly, it positively strengthens the cause of peace in general, and in particular in the Middle East. I ought perhaps to add a third respect; the Conference shows how valuable it is that Asia and Africa, containing two-thirds of the world's population and with less need or desire or danger of war, or capacity to wage it on a large scale, than any other major area,* should have within it, as both partners and a leaven, the People's Republic of China and the Asian parts of the U.S.S.R., ready and willing to co-operate with the many nations of the two Continents, but not seeking to dominate them.

What could the other continents or what could the old Powers, particularly the U.S.A. and Great Britain, do about this Conference? Apart from trying to write it off as 'Communist-inspired' they could use their influence, weak or strong—in some cases amounting even to decisive coercion—in one country or another, to ensure that some countries should be unrepresented and that others should be represented by at any rate some delegates who would try to break the solidarity of the Conference by actually defending Imperialism, or at least by raising and publicising some minor point of disagreement, of which surely many could be found in a world of so many varied and distressed countries. They could try to raise some major conflict between the Socialist sector (over 600,000,000) and the 'uncommitted' sector (over 1,100,000,000) of the two continents.

What actually came of all their efforts? Countries like Turkey and Pakistan, and the Portuguese Colonies, did not attend; a pity, but not surprising. Some twelve colonial countries found their delegates refused passports, or otherwise prevented from starting on

*It is an interesting measure of the imperialistic nature of Imperialism that it is just in these naturally peaceful areas that nearly all the wars, semi-wars, suspended wars and still-born wars of the last ten years—Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaya, Algeria, Kenya, Cyprus, Suez, Syria (with my apologies to British Guiana, British Honduras and Little Rock)—have taken place.

their journeys; a not unexpected manifestation of the freedom of the 'free world', and again a pity—much mitigated by the fact that a surprising number of the 'forbidden' in fact arrived and spoke with vigour. And puppet countries, like Thailand and Iraq, were in fact represented; this can hardly have been desired by the U.S.A. and Britain.

What happened among those who did attend and took part in long plenary sessions, and longer and more important Commissions and Sub-commissions, over seven long working days? Not a whisper of any disagreement or conflict of interest between the Socialist and non-Socialist elements; even an attempt from outside to prevent unanimity over the demand for the proper representation of China in U.N.O. met with failure. The delegates, as at Bandung, preferred to concentrate on elements of agreement and not on those of potential disagreement and thus to create for the future a field of agreement and co-operation. There was not a breach in the solid front of anti-Imperialism, except for a half-hour's public discussion of a minor dispute between two neighbours in Africa, which was speedily conciliated.

Thus, of all the innumerable things that might have been persuaded by the great leaders of the 'free world', indeed, of the whole 'civilised', Western world, to go wrong, of all the many conflicts that might have been developed, there was nothing. Thus this non-governmental sequel to Bandung seemed to have an easier task than Bandung itself, partly no doubt because, being non-governmental, it did not so directly commit governments; yet, since most delegations plainly had the approval of their governments, it gives a pretty clear indication of what governments as well as their peoples really want; (and probably the main reason why it did not have the anxious moments that arose at Bandung and were finally so magnificently surmounted, was that the general situation has improved so much since—and partly because of—Bandung).

This great defeat of war policies* and colonialism of certain reactionary forces among the Western Powers gave the Western Press a pretty problem; was it to remain silent: Or to report? Or to misreport? Or to try the Communist smear? It tried a bit of all these lines. *The Times* itself at an early stage, with talk of a 'Communist masquerade' even before the curtain went up to show whether it was not a masquerade but a masterpiece, made a bid for momentary leadership in the 'How silly can we get?' race. It

*It is interesting to note that the Egyptian Post Office foresaw not merely the success of the Conference, but also its development of the theme of peace; for it issued during the Conference a series of stamps to commemorate it, a prominent feature of which was the dove of peace.

is, I think, worth examining the use of the 'Communist smear' in this particular context. It has been used unhesitatingly, in spite of its utter improbability; for would President Nasser, who puts most of his Communists in prison, allow a 'Communist masquerade' to be held not on his doorstep but in his sitting-room and commemorate it by his postage-stamps? Would Premier Nehru allow prominent Indians, including Mrs. Rameshwara Nehru, to take part in such a masquerade? Would Iraq follow suit? Or would any one of a dozen other countries take the same course resisting even the temptation to insist on the points of difference between them and the Socialist world, three-quarters of which (in terms of population) were represented? And what exactly is the story? Is it that Nehru, Nasser *et haec genera omnia* have 'gone Communist'? Or that they were all hypnotised by the masqueraders on the well-known theory that any percentage of Communists from 2 per cent upwards equals 'Communist domination'. These scared anti-Communists remind one of the 10,000 French troops who surrendered in the war of 1870-71 to half a squadron of Uhlans, and advanced as an excuse that they had been surrounded! There was not in fact a tittle of evidence that the delegates from China and the U.S.S.R. had even attempted to dominate or dictate; and the only 'evidence' that I have seen suggested so far is the close similarity between the demands of the Conference for the prohibition of nuclear tests, the abolition of nuclear warfare, and disarmament, and the corresponding demands of the World Peace Council; but as those demands are now made by the vast majority of the population of the world, the attachment of 'Communist smear' to them must amount to a formal denunciation of the great mass of the world's population as fellow-travellers! (They are certainly very keen to be fellow-survivors.) But the utter folly of the dishonest smear should not blind us to its dangers. It poisons public opinion everywhere, and it is as much part of the Cold War and of the psychological preparation for war as NATO or Dulles, or Montgomery, or the late Senator McCarthy.

Two lessons can perhaps be drawn from the attempt to use the Communist bogey in this wildly unsuitable context. The first is that, if they use it here, they will use it anywhere and everywhere without regard to any evidence; and therefore that no-one need ever take any notice of it. The second is that, if they are reduced to claiming that everyone who advocates peace is a Communist, they are reinforcing the Communist Party in a way of which that Party at any rate need not complain.

One other point relating to the Imperialist reactions to the Conference needs to be examined; what they have done to counter the success of the Conference after that success had been realised. One immediate step was a proposal to amalgamate NATO, SEATO and the Baghdad Pact—a sort of flotation of a new company, ‘Aggression, Inc.’, to take over two corpses and a ghost as a ‘going concern’. The next was the announcement that Mr. Dulles would go to Ankara to attend a meeting of the Ghost, in order to deal with—Yes, if you please—‘Soviet threats’, by launching a ‘Middle East aid drive’ at low rates of interest; this was no doubt partly by way of specific reaction to an offer made by the chief delegate of the U.S.S.R. in plenary session to the effect that the Soviet Union was ready to give aid within the limits of its powers to any Asian or African country in need of it, whether in terms of goods or money, or transport, or research—including the loan of Soviet professors or the reception of students in the U.S.S.R. ‘on one condition only, namely, that there be no conditions’. (The offer of low interest rates from ‘Uncle’ Sam produces the same sort of shocked surprise as one would get from the news that the archiepiscopal representative on earth of the Prince of Peace had joined the Peace Movement.) It is plain to demonstration that the Imperialists have estimated the Conference as a great step in the strengthening of the Peace front against them, which they must try to counter by the best bids they can make to bribe back some part of the Asian world, and particularly the important and liquid Middle East, into their camp.

Looking back at the Conference, and trying to estimate its total results, I am convinced that it must be reckoned as a major blow against war policies and colonialism and a defeat for the U.S.A., not merely in its conflict with the Socialist world, but also in its attempts to rule the whole world.

Next there is the colossal importance to be attached to the fact that all who need capital aid, which means most of the countries in Asia and Africa, are now no longer faced by the difficulty that they have no choice but to go to the big capitalist countries, and accept aid from them on their terms. They are now in the position of the peasant who goes to the market to buy a cow, and finds that there are two people in the market, who have a cow to sell; they can get aid from the Socialist countries without strings, at low rates, or they bargain with the capitalist lenders for better terms, for each side has only to look round the market to see another willing vendor of a cow. How many decades, or years, or months,

is it since two money Powers tried to 'teach a lesson' to a certain Egyptian, by abruptly telling him that he could not, repeat not, have the money they had promised him to raise the standard of living of a score of million people by building a dam at a place called, I think, Asswan, because they did not like the people with whom he associated? Here is a measure of the swiftness of today's advance; I may be seventy years old, but I will, repeat will, see these people off the scene before I die!

DOCUMENT OF THE MONTH

The Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference addressed a message to the people of the world on New Year's Day as follows :

We representatives of African and Asian peoples met in Cairo from December 26, 1957, to January 1, 1958, to discuss international problems that concern the Afro-Asian peoples in particular. We reviewed political, economic, social and cultural problems which face our people. We have been animated by one feeling only, of co-operation and unity among our people and complete friendship with all peoples of the world.

After seven days of harmonious discussion, our conference has reached unanimous agreement on proposals for the solution of various problems. This proves that the Afro-Asian peoples in the task of supporting peace have reached unity on a higher level and have arrived at a common programme of action. The conference has unanimously agreed to set up a permanent body in Cairo for the purpose of promoting the realisation of its resolutions.

We declare that the principles adopted by the Bandung conference of April, 1955, should remain the basis of international relations. We renew our absolute support for the following ten principles which have

had the backing of our peoples during the past years:

1. Respect for the fundamental RIGHTS OF MAN and the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter.
2. Respect for the sovereignty of all peoples and the integrity of their territories.
3. Recognition of equality among all races and all nations big and small.
4. Abstention from all interference in the affairs of our countries.
5. Respect for the right of every nation to defend itself individually or collectively in accordance with the United Nations Charter.
6. (a) Abstention from the use of collective defensive organisations for the service of the private ends of any great power. (b) Abstention by any power from applying pressure upon other countries.
7. Avoidance of aggressive actions and threats and the use of force against the territorial security or political independence of any country.
8. Settling all international disputes by peaceful means such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial measures, or any other peaceful means chosen by the parties concerned in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

9. The development of our common interests and mutual co-operation.

10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

We are fully convinced that if these ten principles are accepted present world tension will definitely relax and the deadly fear of annihilation that now grips the hearts of millions can be lifted.

We declare that the foundations of peace cannot be firmly established until we dissipate this tension. We welcome every step taken in this direction. We call upon the peoples of the world to use every means possible for the creation of areas of agreement and understanding, which will inevitably lead to disarmament, to the banning of the production of nuclear weapons, their testing and use. We call upon the peoples of the world to direct their scientific efforts and the use of nuclear energy towards peaceful purposes and the service of humanity and for the realisation of prosperity and complete co-operation among peoples on the basis of equality and according to the United Nations Charter.

The Afro-Asian peoples believe in the United Nations Charter.

The Afro-Asian peoples believe that imperialist domination, foreign exploitation and other evils which result from the subjugation of the peoples are a denial of the fundamental RIGHTS OF MAN and a violation of the United Nations Charter, apart from other harmful effects on both the governments and the governed which impede the development of peace and international co-operation. The continued existence of imperialism is not compatible with the new era the world is now passing through. The Afro-Asian peoples firmly believe in the right of every people to their freedom and independence.

The Afro-Asian peoples desire unity, to work together, to help each other, in order to struggle for the welfare of the Afro-Asian peoples as well as the whole of mankind. We shall devote our unremitting efforts for the achievement of enduring peace in the world.

Peace will surely be victorious. Humanity can face the future with hope and confidence.

This is the New Year message of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference in Cairo to the whole world.

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LABOUR DISCUSSION FORUM

READERS HAVE RESOLVED *this year it seems to keep letters short. Only one this month is over 300 words. Variety in topic and in age. This is as it should be. For the socialist movement leads to maturity in youth and youthfulness in age. Peace problems and youth questions take centre stage at present. Any letters—or any answers—for March should reach us by Monday, March 10, addressed to: The Editor, Labour Discussion Forum, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N3.*

Disarmament : Which Way?

Perhaps now that Dutt has said rather more about unilateralism a few words about the attitude of some of us who support it would not be amiss.

He condemns unilateralism because he believes that the American H-bomb would still be with us. He says on page 570 of the December issue: 'Indeed, some of its supporters have argued that Britain need not manufacture since Britain is already "protected" by the U.S. "great deterrent".' If he believes this is the end-product of unilateralism then he is right to oppose it. But I can deny that the argument he quoted was ever used at Brighton.

Does Dutt really think that having got rid of our H-bomb we would quietly let the Americans stay here? I am sure that the unilateralists had no other thought than that the U.S. would be compelled to remove her bases in Britain; having argued it to the point of getting rid of our H-bomb, getting rid of the American bases would follow as day follows night.

In conclusion, I would say that we must do two things: rid ourselves of both the H-bombs and the Americans. This is not pacifism, but recognition of the fact that it is no good possessing a weapon that you can only use to defend someone

else, and the possession of which only invites your own destruction.

If we are to campaign for the removal of the Americans this will only be part of the job, whereas I believe that unilateralism will fulfil both.

J. ELLIS,
Thirsk.

As Others See Us

From here in Canada it looked to me as though left sectarianism was responsible for the Norwood resolution at the Labour Party Conference calling for unilateral renunciation of the H-bomb. Moreover, when it was defeated this captured the headlines, concealed the advanced thinking of the British people and so helped the Dulles line prepare for N.A.T.O.

At a meeting here I heard a youth organiser complain that people won't come out to demonstrate against the bomb as they did over Suez. Suez was a typical crisis; demonstration against it was typical in form. Radiation and the threat of H-warfare are like capitalism itself; you have to live under it to fight against it. You can't be in the street every day. The resistance of the people is a passive resistance; it deserves respect, it needs encouragement. If someone could lead a movement like Gandhi, would it not help?

The concept of preventing a third world war poses for us on a world scale a problem like establishing socialism as one country did in 1917. Peace is the path to socialism; it will remain the central task until the danger of world war is past.

I have not followed your debate enough to judge fairly; yet I am sure that the division on the left in understanding peaceful co-existence is still the biggest obstacle to isolating those who are willing to risk continuing the arms drive.

H.M.

Toronto, Canada

Argue and March—but March !

Palme Dutt writes as though the only thing holding up the struggle for peace is the resolution the Labour Party Conference did *not* pass—the demand for Britain unilaterally to stop making the bomb. Unilateralism, he says, causes confusion in the ranks, because it is ‘an untenable proposition which could only mislead and confuse the real fight for peace’. That one is needed he, the unilateralists, the pacifists and all should agree. But I do not believe that it is unilateralism which is holding up the fight. On the contrary, perhaps; for I suspect that much support for unilateralism comes from the fact that many in the labour movement doubt whether the Shadow Cabinet intend, or any longer know how, to develop an energetic fight; whilst they feel that the unilateralists are at least ‘whole-hoggers’ ready to have a real go.

Let me say at once that personally I agree with Palme Dutt’s analysis of what is wrong with unilateralism. I would go further. When the unilateralists sidestep the need for Britain to take the Soviet Union’s outstretched hand and thus force

agreement to ban on the U.S.A., in hard fact, and whatever they may think, they are falling into the trap of surrendering to cowardly and unprincipled anti-communism. But for that, two factors have been to blame in the past: failure to resist the cold war on the one hand, and a sectarian outlook on the other. For whilst it is not true that only the Communists are ready to sacrifice and struggle for peace, the unilateralists certainly have not got the only answer.

Every road can lead to a peace campaign; our trouble is that it does not—as yet. Every action to resist the war moves should be encouraged with might and main. More emphasis on that and a little less on shortcomings is what is needed at this stage. If the unilateralists will get on the move, good luck to them! Let us argue with them as we march—as long as we don’t forget to shout the main slogan to by-standers: ‘Stop H-bomb warfare!’

What counts now is movement. Without that the by-standers will remain standing, and internationalists, unilateralists and neutralists will go down to total defeat.

The main enemy today is not diversion but despair. Remove that and you build a mass movement; and a mass movement will overcome despair. What you want to bring to the doorstep is confidence and to leave courage there. You don’t say on the doorstep: ‘Please, support unilateralism!’ nor ‘Campaign for a Summit meeting to ease international tension and prepare concrete steps for disarmament and peace’. You say: ‘Want to get rid of the bomb?’ And they say: ‘But the Yanks won’t let you.’ You reply: ‘Get rid of the Yanks too.’ They come back with: ‘How? you can’t do a thing about it, mate, not if you live a

hundred years.' You retort: 'You may not live a hundred days if you don't act now!' Then they answer: 'Well, what can I do?—you tell me that!' At that point you tell them—and start building a mass movement.

M. E. A. JUST,
Essex.

'Just You Answer This!'

Are young people today afraid of 'an honest job of work'? Here are some questions for 'our Elders'.

Only strong organisation and militancy can force good conditions of work. True?

Miners, engineers, railwaymen, electricians are highly organised and militant. True?

Office workers are not much organised and not at all militant. True?

Then why is it that they, and not the far more powerful industrial workers, enjoy these conditions:

full pay during sickness up to six weeks and often longer;

a working week of under forty hours, often well under;

long-established annual leave with full pay for at least two weeks, sometimes three?

Last question to your readers: Is it surprising that when we leave school, seeing the hours our parents work in industry, many who have the choice go in for office work?

DES HANNON,
Bethnal Green.

Our Elders and Us

What is wrong with Youth today? What is wrong with their Elders? Both problems have the same roots. The cynicism and indifference of youth towards political matters come from the wholesale betrayal of principles by the political leaders of the

Left, brought up in the 'twenties and 'thirties.

True, some Left Leaders have retained their integrity, but the majority have prostituted themselves for privilege and security. Whilst it is necessary to examine the history of the British Left over the past four decades, it suffices to prove the point merely to examine post-war events.

The Labour Party receiving a mandate in 1945 to construct the Socialist order proceeded to replace shareholders by State bureaucrats, open the arms drive, stir up colonial strife and disillusion the masses. Leaders sold themselves into the Lords, became 'statesmen' and spat on those who had fought to bring them to power.

Is it any wonder that young people are sceptical and suspicious of politicians? They think: 'Socialism has been tried; why not make the best of capitalism, with Rock and Skiffle—both good fun and at least comprehensible?'

But there is a growing awareness of the evils of a world where H-bombs threaten to destroy civilisation, where millions are struggling for existence and others squander millions on rubbish. This awareness is as yet perhaps inarticulate, but it is growing and gaining strength.

It is the duty of all whose vision of a new society is ever fresh, no matter what may blur the vision and even temporarily diminish hopes of the ability of man to find a solution to his difficulties, to come to terms with the struggling aspirations of youth and lead it into the right channels.

Only then will the crimes of the past be like bad dreams.

ALAN R. BENNETT,
Poole.

'When Youth Use Their Eyes'

I see with great disappointment that the young man who asks if we want the youth with us propounds the question, 'How square is an egg?'

As far as I can make out, the terms 'square' or 'egg-head' in modern parlance signify anyone whose taste, say, in literature, is above the level of a horror-comic; in music, above the level of a frantic, epileptic, hysterical beating of tomtoms or kitchen apparatus; in theatre, higher than a vulgar leg-show. If we are to give up any intelligence we may have, or deprive ourselves of all cultural appreciation we may have acquired, in order to have the youth with us, I am afraid I would have to vote for going on without them.

Fortunately, this is not the choice before us. I am quite sure that the youth, once it begins to look at things with its own eyes instead of through the spectacles of commercial publicity stunts, will see that there are things of more importance and of greater lasting value to mankind than the latest passing craze, whether it be skiffle, rock an' roll, Tommy Steele or any other ephemeral idiocy.

At least, that is my faith and I live on the strength of it. I cannot believe that all the centuries of the evolution and development of man's culture culminated in a frenzied scraping on a washing-board.

D. H. SCOTT,
Ayrshire.

'Not To Be Interested Isn't Living'

Hearing the radio say over and over how much more the Americans were going to spend on arms led to a heated argument between my friend and me. At last he said: 'Well, I'm not interested in politics. I want to get on with my own life.

I'm only interested in living'. I told him that you have to be interested in politics. It isn't living not to be interested in what goes on around you; it is only two-thirds living. You can't spend your life thinking of the present and not of the future.

In our age group it is expression of opinion that is lacking, not opinion. It isn't really that we don't think; it is just that life at art college is so intense that there seems no time to talk about politics. Scrawled in a conspicuous position is 'Go Home, Yanks'; it has been there a long time. When it is pointed out, students are jolted into expressing their opinions, and one begins to wonder if any of them really disagree with it; it has not been erased.

The art schools are short of equipment. Such money grants as are available go to the science side. If they had their way we would all be robots, with no cultural life, just to manufacture bombs and 'keep up with the Jones'.

(Aged 16) ANN MILDWATER.

Friern Barnet.

Lessons From France

One of my big complaints in criticism of left thought generally in this country is the virtual neglect of France—of the neglect of that great and militant Communist Party and of the Socialists and others who work with it.

There has been a tendency to imitate too closely the example of the U.S.S.R. and I think it would be vastly more profitable to study the day-to-day movement in France.

As to the Labour Discussion Forum, I think it is excellent; and when it blows up into real controversy, as on Women's Wages or Israel, it proves its existence is justified.

L. GREEN,
Herts.

WHERE THE WITCH-HUNT ENDS

'Dogwatch' logs the first days of Hitler and how he got there.

Twenty-five years ago Hitler was finally put into power by Field Marshal von Hindenburg, President of Germany (January 30, 1933); without Parliamentary majority, and just when the Nazi vote had declined by 2,000,000. Within a month the signal for full terror against the German working class was given by the burning of the Reichstag (February 27, 1933). The Third Reich 'to last a thousand years' had been set up. Re-arming was in full swing. After three years Nazi planes were bombing Spanish towns; after six years they were bombing British towns. In Britain, civilian deaths exceeded 60,000, many from Nazi rocket missiles. These were the primitive V.1 and V.2, with only 'conventional' explosive; the Nazis had no nuclear warheads then.

Here are some dates to remember:

April, 1932. In presidential elections, the Social Democrats supported Hindenburg as a 'lesser evil' than Hitler. They rejected the Communist Party's proposal for unity for a working class candidate, and their warning that 'a vote for Hindenburg is a vote for Hitler'.

July 20. Chancellor von Papen declared a state of emergency in Prussia and expelled the Prussian Social Democratic Government from office. Communist Party proposed a general strike to force repeal of emergency decrees and disband Storm Troops. Rejected; and the Social Democrats began a legal process to test von Papen's action. (The case was still proceeding when Hitler came to power, and lapsed.)

July 31. General election. Nazis won 230 seats and their peak vote of 13,746,000. Social Democrats had 133 (losing 10); Communist Party had 89 (gaining 12 with over 5,000,000 votes).

September. Von Papen brought in 'Hunger Decrees' and economy

cuts. Nearly 8,000,000 unemployed. New emergency powers, with death penalty for 'political acts of violence'. Emergency Courts imposed long sentences.

November 6. New general election. Nazis lost 34 seats and vote sank by 2,000,000 to 11,729,000, as against total Socialist and Communist vote of 13,241,000. Social Democrats lost 12 seats; Communist gained 11, with 6,000,000 votes.

Long negotiations began between Hindenburg, and von Papen and Hitler.

November 17. Von Papen resigned; Hindenburg appointed General Kurt von Schleicher as Chancellor.

November 19. Professor Laski wrote of the Nazis: 'The day when they were a vital threat is gone.' (*Daily Herald*.)

January 25, 1933. Provocative Nazi demonstrations, with strong police protection.

January 28. Hindenburg forced von Schleicher to resign; and in-

structed von Papen to negotiate with Hitler to form a government.

January 30. Hindenburg appointed Hitler Chancellor of Germany. Communists proposed to Social Democrats and the unions a general strike. Refused on the ground that Hitler was 'legally' in power; this was a 'lesser evil' than an 'illegal' Nazi terror; they must wait until Hitler had violated legality.

Reichstag dissolved; general election called for March 5.

February. Storm troopers were armed and made 'auxiliary police'. Communists' H.Q. searched frequently and occupied by storm troopers.

February 15. The *Times* correspondent wrote conditions 'render the holding of normal elections impossible'.

February 24. A new search of Communist H.Q. and Nazis announced they had found 'seriously incriminating' material. Wilhelm Pieck, Communist leader, gave public warning that an act of provocation was being planned by the Nazi Government. Communist Reichstag Deputies gave similar warning to foreign press correspondents.

February 27, 9 p.m. Reichstag was found in flames and burnt down. Nazis announced it was work of the Communists. Night raids on thousands of Communists and militant trade unionists. All working class papers seized and suppressed. All meetings banned.

March 1. In a radio speech Goering said: 'We have passed to the offensive along the whole front. It will be my principal task to exterminate communism from our people.' Communists appealed to the Social Democratic Party and trade union leaders for a united front to oppose Hitler. The appeal was unanswered.

Terror intensified. Nazis arrested a German Communist Party Deputy, a Dutch alleged 'Communist' called Van der Lubbe and three Bulgarians, of whom one was Georgi Dimitrov, on the charge of burning down the Reichstag.

March 5. In the election, the Communist Party nevertheless won 81 seats, although not allowed to take them.

The Nazis continued the terror, with murders, torture, thousands of arrests, seizure of property, and destruction of all democratic organisations, including finally the Social Democratic Party (June 22, 1933).

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BOOKS

The Chinese Economy.

By Solomon Adler.

Routledge & Kegan Paul. 276 pp. 25s.

We are pleased to print this review (which first appeared in China Reconstructs) by the distinguished economist who was chairman of the recent deputation to Britain of Chinese business-men—Ed. L.M.

There have been a number of good books on the new China by western authors in recent years. But as far as I know, Mr. Solomon Adler's *The Chinese Economy* is the first compact yet comprehensive study of the fundamental characteristics and trends of development of the Chinese economy in the English language. It covers its ground straightforwardly and logically. It has none of the cant or nonsense which many western social scientists have frequently felt free to indulge in when China was their subject.

Beginning with elementary background information, the book goes on to review the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction in 1949-52 and then to analyse the evolving structure of China's new economy from the adoption of the Common Programme in 1949 to the high tide of socialist transformation in 1956. Then follow two chapters apiece on industry and agriculture, with special emphasis on the First Five-Year Plan. The method of presentation combines factual description with analysis. Here, as elsewhere in the book, the many tables enhance its value as a basic reference work.

Further chapters deal, respectively, with transport, commerce, public finance, living standards and foreign

trade treated in a way that should be of great interest to businessmen, among others. Mr. Adler's book is important to the general reader as well as the scholar, I believe, for the following reasons.

First, the author has made a detailed and systematic study not only of the relevant documentary material, both official and unofficial, but also of the writings of foreigners who have visited China before and since the liberation. His book is the product of painstaking research meeting the highest scholastic standards. It is neither cursory comment nor casual reportage.

Secondly, Mr. Adler has the great advantage of writing with a thorough first-hand knowledge of China's economic background which few foreigners can rival. He spent five years in this country in an official position sufficiently high to keep him in intimate touch with current economic development, in the critical period of change that preceded the liberation. His vivid awareness of the recent past enriches his understanding of the present, and succinct comparisons of economic conditions before and after liberation highlight his appraisal of the outstanding achievements of the new China in economic reconstruction. I personally regret that many of these illuminating historical references are placed in footnotes rather than incorporated in the text.

Thirdly, Mr. Adler's account is honest and objective. It is scientific in the best sense, that is the author is concerned both with meticulously ascertaining the facts and with emphasising and evaluating the main trend. The book contains much detailed and statistical information, but the trees are never allowed to obscure the forest. Some western writers, moved by a strong and

obvious anti-socialist bias, go out of their way to belittle new China's achievements. Others have unscrupulously tried to create the bogey of a 'national Communist' China emerging on the path of world conquest. There is no mumbo-jumbo of this kind in Mr. Adler's work. On the contrary, his scientific approach enables him to appreciate the true significance of the rise of People's China and the nature and process of its socialist transformation in agriculture, as well as in industry and commerce. Of course, other scholars may differ with him on some specific points in his analysis or on individual statistical items, such as those he deduces from pre-liberation figures. But no one who is objective, it seems to me, is likely to find fault with his general method and his basic judgment.

Written in a lucid and lively style, the book makes good reading in form as well as content. However, there is a critical point that may be made in this regard. The author's literary usage of words that have a different and special connotation in political and philosophical terminology sometimes tends to blur meanings. Thus the reference to China's 'Fabian way' may be misunderstood by some, even though the author remarks that he employs the adjective in its classical sense of deliberate and careful. Similarly, his references to 'the pragmatic mind' might be mistaken to mean that China is affected by the philosophy of pragmatism, though Mr. Adler appears to be using it simply as a synonym for 'practical'. Finally, it is unfortunate that in the end-paper map, certainly as a result of over-sight, a part of the territory of Vietnam has been included in China's borders.

With regard to the whole book, this reviewer would have wished that

the author had drawn the political conclusions flowing logically from his economic analysis. But these weaknesses, which can well be corrected in any future editions, do not affect the general merit of the book, which can be recommended as the best single introduction to the study of the new Chinese economy in English by any western writer.

CHI CHAO-TING.

Soviet Football.

By Andrei Starostin.

Soviet News. 28 pp. 6d.

Until Moscow Dynamo visited Britain in 1945, few people here had the slightest idea that Russians played football. 'Reds play football? What, our game? Don't be silly, man!' was the attitude of the man in the street before that year. But we soon found that the lads from Moscow knew most of the tricks. They drew with Chelsea, beat Arsenal (in dense fog at High-bury), trounced Cardiff and drew with Glasgow Rangers.

But some 18 years earlier a team of East London junior amateurs had tasted, so to speak, the delights of Soviet soccer. Then, in 1927, a side, picked from clubs in the then British Workers' Sports Federation, visited the Soviet Union and played against the best that Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, Kiev and the Donetz Basin could produce. For that visit (and for another a year later) I had the pleasure of being player-manager. Our lads rated top football there as equalling the best British senior amateur standards.

Now, however, Soviet sides like Dynamo, Spartak, Zenith and others are world known, their class equaling (and sometimes surpassing) that of our famous professional clubs—

Wolves, West Bromwich Albion, and the rest. There is, of course, no mystery in the meteoric rise of Soviet football. All aspects—coaching, training, facilities, playing—are aimed at bringing to as many young people as is possible the health benefits of physical culture.

Just as until a few years ago few in Britain knew that Russians played the game, fewer still realise the actual extent of British influence on football there. 'Hands', 'penalty', 'corner', and 'offside', are part of Russian football jargon as it is in many other countries; but who knows, for example, that Willy 'Ginger' Charnock was the darling of Muscovite fans in the early part of the century? Who knows that, with him, other Britishers (Messrs. Thomas, Jones, Parker, Kirkman, Newman, Ellison and Webster) played for Orekhovo Sports Club, at Morozov Mills, in Moscow, and were tagged by some the 'Magnificent Morozovites'? I, for one, did not until I read a fascinating booklet, *Soviet Football*, published in Soviet News Sixpenny Series.

The author, Andrei Starostin, is one of the Starostin brothers—a famous Russian footballing trio.

GEORGE SINFIELD.

First Poems.

By Peter Tempest.

Lawrence & Wishart. 47 pp. 4s. 6d.

Readers of the poem 'Hands', originally published in this journal in August, 1957, which was widely appreciated, will welcome this appearance of a first collection of poems by Peter Tempest. 'Hands' opens the collection which covers a wide range of themes, grave and gay, social and personal, not all on an equal level, but all expressing genuine feeling and love of life and hatred of all that destroys life. Here is a clear fresh voice of song, far removed from the crabbed contortions of the more old-fashioned exponents of 'modern verse' still surviving in corners, a voice speaking for humanity and to humanity with sensitive and tender feeling. Lovers of poetry will look forward to more from Peter Tempest.

R.P.D.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

BOOKS

- Shtimber Grove.* Mikhail Prishvin. *Lawrence & Wishart.* 192 pp. 11s. 6d.
Dawn on the River and other Stories. Contemporary Chinese Writers. Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1957. 170 pp.
Peking Opera. Text by Rewi Alley. New World Press, Peking, 1957. 99 pp. 7s. 6d.
The Origins of Marxian Thought. Auguste Cornu: Ph. D., Charles C. Thomas. Springfield, Illinois, U.S.A. 128 pp. \$3.75.
The South African Treason Trial. Lionel Forman and E. S. (Solly) Sachs. John Calder (Publishers), Ltd. 216 pp. 18s.
Selected Works of Lu Hsun. Vol. 2. Foreign Languages Press, Peking. 364 pp.
The First Labour Government, by R. W. Lyman. Chapman & Hall. 302 pp. 25s.
Decision in Africa, by W. Alphaeus Hulton. International Publishers, New York. 256 pp. \$4.00.
Midnight, Mao Tun. Foreign Languages Press, Peking. 524 pp.
Changing China, Michael Shapiro. Lawrence & Wishart. 182 pp. 15s.

PAMPHLETS

- Restrictive Practices of Building and Building Material Firms.* Labour Research Department. 12 pp. 4d.
Soviet People on Holiday, by Vladimir Koltsov. Soviet News. 42 pp. 6d.
British-Soviet Relations—1957. Soviet News. 40 pp. 3d.
Disarmament—Soviet Government Statement. Soviet News. 24 pp. 3d.
Which Way America, Which Way Britain? by Wilfred Wellock. Society for Democratic Integration of Industry. 52 pp. 1s. 6d.
Forty Years 1917-1957. Soviet News. 72 pp. 4d.

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(Continued from page ii of cover)

and most intimate enjoyment of their homes in America now, immediately and for all time'.

Some people brought their good wishes in person—such as an 'Anon' of the fund, who walked into our office on Christmas Eve. You may guess he was warmly greeted! And then overseas readers sent messages from Australia, Canada, China, France, the German Democratic Republic, India, Japan, Poland, the Soviet Union, Sweden and U.S.A. We have to record presents from Canada to make up for donations which an English Old Age Pensioner can no longer afford to give us, for example; from China, some exquisite hand-painted decorations on hand-made paper with envelopes to match for the fund's benefit; from U.S.A. even items toward staff seasonal

celebrations. Quite a number of readers too let us know what they thought of our fresh cover. As we expected, views ranged all the way from No, No! to Aye, Aye!

Note the fund improvement—although that is partly due to two large and unexpected gifts. But it also reflects this mood of optimism and fighting spirit. Thus Oliver Twist and his friends write that their ten shilling note 'is of course pro-British and derogatory sterling, so it makes sense to us! Oh blessed Keswick! We thank thee for teaching us these words! Surely they will be cherished and quoted by all working people demanding overdue increases from this government of City Slickers'. December donations totalled:

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